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Trees set April, 1910, by Thos. H. Littlepage, Esq., Washington, D. C., and U. S. Senator Bourne. Photograph taken Aug. 15, 1910.

The How of Growing Sober Paragon Chestnuts

*A Few Plain Facts in Solution
of the Problem "How to Make
the Land Pay Better"*

B.P.I. FIELD INVESTIGATIONS IN PROGRESS
ANSWERED
REC'D JUN 17 1911

GLEN BROTHERS, Inc.
Glenwood Nursery, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

Exclusive Sales Agents and Distributors for the U. S. and Foreign Countries

Received from Prof. W. N. Van Coop



A typical 3-year-old Sober Paragon Chestnut tree growing at Paxinos, Pa.

Up in the heart of the Allegheny Mountains, near Shamokin, Pa., lives a man who is making an independent fortune every year out of chestnuts—not ordinary chestnuts, but **extra**-ordinary ones. The **man** is Col. C. K. Sober and the **nut**, which has been named for him, is the Sober Paragon Chestnut.

The origin of this wonderful Chestnut, the best methods of caring for the trees and the other essential facts concerning it—which enabled Colonel Sober to sell over \$15,000 worth of nuts in 1907 and \$48,000 worth in 1910—are fully explained in the following pages.

The purpose of this booklet is to open to farmers and land-holders, through the medium of a few plain facts, the remarkable opportunities for profit offered in the growing of Sober Paragon Chestnuts.

These facts, supplied personally by Colonel Sober, **prove** that his success is not due to any special advantages, either of knowledge or location—for his great establishment is no better, in these regards, than thousands of others are, or might be made, in practically all parts of the United States, and in Southern Canada.

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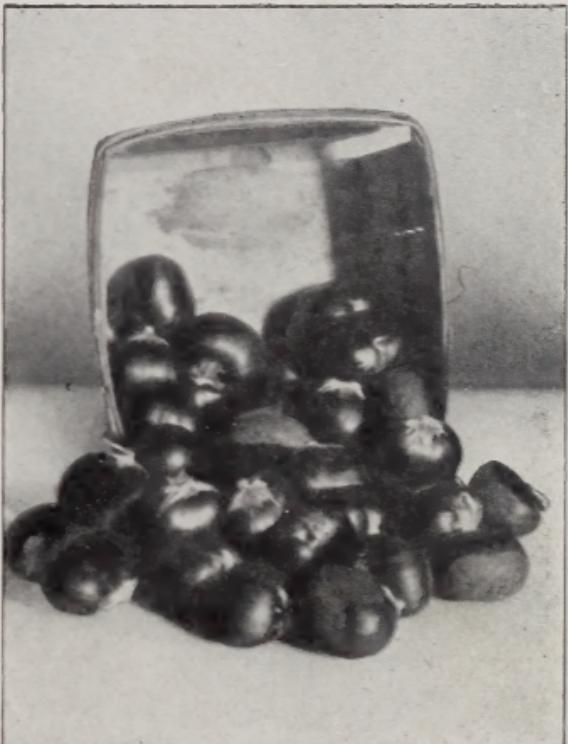
What the Sober Paragon Chestnut Is

THE Sober Paragon Chestnut, developed by Col. C. K. Sober, of Paxinos, Pa., and introduced exclusively by us, is enormously large. Single specimens often measure $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, or more, across, while average nuts rarely measure less than $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. They are three to four times as large as the common wild Chestnut. It takes only forty-eight Sober Paragon Chestnuts, average size, to fill a quart measure.

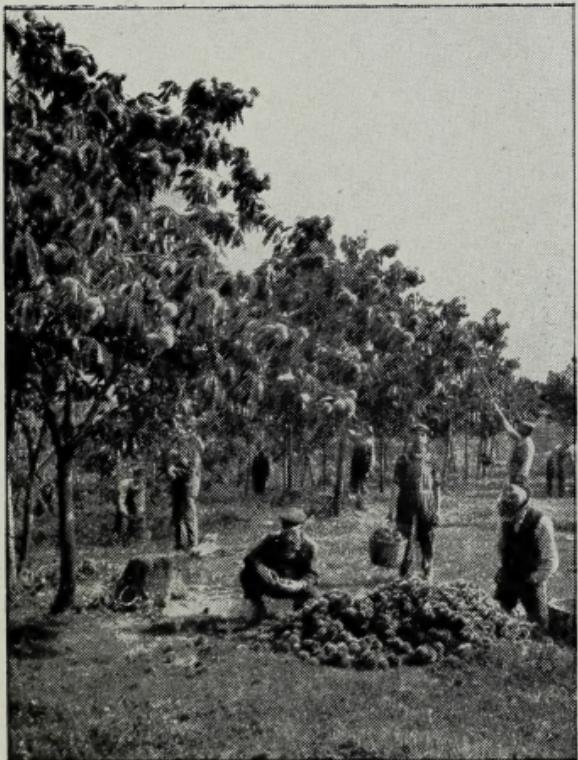
All of us are more or less familiar with the very large chestnuts that are often sold, but we are also too familiar with their astringent, puckery flavor. *Sober Paragon Chestnuts are fully as mild and sweet as the native chestnuts.*

The Sober Paragon Chestnut is wonderfully productive, as many of the illustrations will indicate. The stock we sell is known as three-year trees—that is, two-year seedlings, grafted with Sober Paragon scions, and left to grow in the nursery for a year longer before selling. It is nothing unusual to see these little trees, which are scarcely over 4 feet high, and not thicker than a man's thumb, bearing several full-sized burs while still in the nursery row—the first summer after grafting. We know of a five-year-old tree, standing about twelve feet high, which set 500 burs in one season.

Of course all burs ought to be removed for the first two seasons, so as to throw the vitality into branch and root, but the above will indicate how



A fair sample of Sober Paragon Chestnuts.
Nuts average 35 to 50 to the quart



Harvesting Sober Paragon Chestnuts in Colonel Sober's groves at Paxinos, Pa.

wonderfully productive these trees are. For the first few years it is well to remove, early in the summer, a portion of the burs, to prevent the tree being overtaxed. When they come into full bearing—say at fifteen to twenty years—they will be fairly loaded with great burs practically every year.

The Sober Paragon Chestnut tree is of very rapid growth, often making as high as five feet from the graft in a single year, while bearing quantities of nuts. Its vitality is simply marvelous. The Sober Paragon has no "off" years, as the wild nuts do. The trees bear more heavily some years than others, but they always bear.

Sober Paragon Chestnuts do not drop as the wild varieties do, but remain in the bur—a decided advantage, as they cannot in this way get lost under the tree. When ripe, the burs, which contain three to five large nuts, turn brown and open up of their own accord—this generally occurs the last of September or the first of October; frost is not necessary to open the burs. They may then be easily removed from the tree and spread out to dry. The best way to get them off the trees is to use a long pole, with a fork on the end. With this implement they may be taken easily without bruising or injuring the branches.

These burs are then laid out and dried for a few days, when the nuts can be lifted out easily with the fingers. They should be graded carefully and sent to market as soon as possible so to realize the best prices. Colonel Sober ships in crates holding a bushel each and finds that the extra pains he takes to get the nuts to market in prime condition pays handsomely. The illustration on last cover page shows a "harvesting scene" at Colonel Sober's, and indicates the extent of the work done there. The burs are burned as soon as emptied of the nuts, to get them out of the way: burs that drop during the summer are also carefully raked up and burned.

How the Sober Paragon Chestnut Tree Grows and Bears

THE Sober Paragon Chestnut is naturally a dwarf. Properly trained, it grows scarcely more than twenty feet high. It has a broad, roundish bushy top, and is really very ornamental, while a commercial grove of the trees is a very attractive sight indeed.

Wherever it can be given the proper soil, this Chestnut is almost an ideal lawn tree. For those who admire the unusual things in ornamental planting, it is particularly desirable, as its smooth trunk, roundish, dense head, handsome, dark green leaves, and great burs, render it very attractive for lawn, garden or park, or for roadsides. The leaves retain their color until well into the fall, and stay on the branches longer than the leaves of most other trees do.

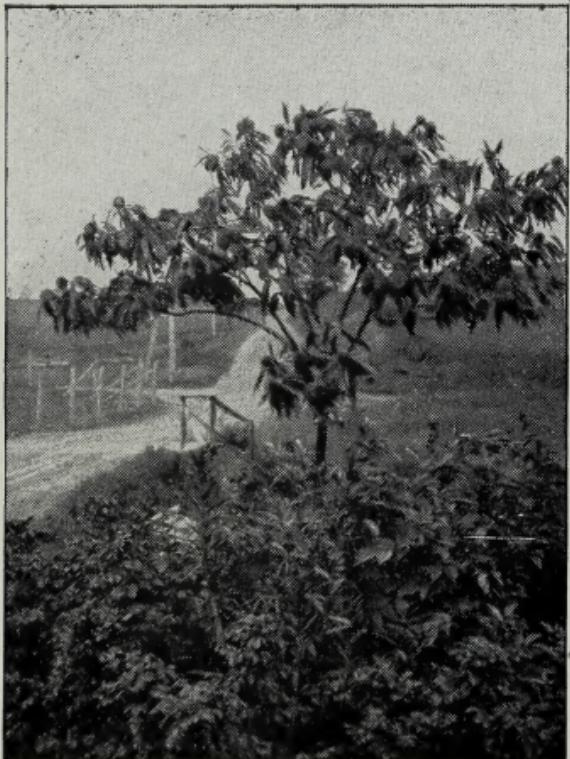
The Sober Paragon Chestnut will thrive practically everywhere—East, West, North and South; it will withstand extremes of heat, cold and drought with less injury than most other trees. However, it requires certain things in the way of soil and drainage, as will be explained.

In choosing the site for a grove, select a rocky or gravelly soil, well drained—the deeper the gravelly condition, the better. The chestnut, even more than other trees, thrives by the mass of fine, net-like roots which its main, or tap-root, throws out; hence, the stonier the soil, the greater the quantity of fine roots.

This is important, but it is *absolutely essential* that the ground be perfectly drained. Although the Paragon Chestnut thrives best where it can



A 7-year-old Sober Paragon Chestnut tree.
Note fine form and abundance of burs.



A pleasing and practical ornamental effect—5-year-old Sober Paragon Chestnut tree at roadside

make the greatest quantity of fine roots, these will decay quickly in wet soil, causing the trees to die within a very short time.

On his farm at Paxinos, Pa., Mr. Sober now has hundreds of acres of steep hillside, formerly covered with native timber, cleared and planted to groves of the Sober Paragon Chestnut. These are thriving wonderfully, as various illustrations in this booklet will show. Some parts of this grove are planted in grain, while other sections are used for pasture. This is perfectly safe, as cattle do not injure the trees.

Fall is, perhaps, the best time to plant Sober Paragon Chestnut trees, because then the soil is still warm from the summer's sunshine and rain, and rich with fallen leaves, etc. At that season, too, the rain and melting snow of winter help to pack the earth more solidly about the roots, which is absolutely essential, as no tree will thrive properly unless the soil lies tightly about each little root.

Do not fail to plant in the spring, however, if you do not get started in the fall. Spring-planted trees, with proper care, will make a quick start, and a good growth that year. The principal requirement is that they be set before the sap starts. The sturdy little tree, illustrated on the cover of this booklet, which bore **nine full-sized burs the first season**, was planted in Booneville, Ind., in the spring, and was but 30 inches high when planted.

For the best results in planting, select land as directed above, dig holes large enough to take in the roots without cramping or doubling them up and place the tree so it will stand as deep as it did in the nursery row, with growing ends of roots turned down and not up. If any roots are bruised when received, trim them off clean with a sharp knife. If sod is used, place it at the surface, roots up. **Planting cannot be done too carefully.**

Always pack the soil firmly about the roots. If new land is used, it should be plowed over once before planting, if not too rough. Fertilize, if possible, with a combination of bone, potash and nitrate of soda, in the following proportion: 1000 pounds bone, 300 pounds potash, and 200 pounds nitrate of soda per acre. For best results the bone and potash should be worked into the soil, while the nitrate of soda will do more good if put on in three or four different applications during the season. It is only fair to say that Colonel Sober has never used a fertilizer of any kind—depending upon keeping his trees well mulched with straw and leaves.

The fine, hair-like roots of the Sober Paragon Chestnut suffer by exposure. When we ship them they are packed almost air-tight, and the box should not be opened till you are ready to plant. If unpacked long before planting, however, cover roots with wet burlap or plunge them into thin mud, or, better still, dig a trench and heel them in. Neglect of this may cost the life of the tree.

For a commercial grove, it will pay to set the trees rather close at first—say 160 trees to the acre, or seventeen feet apart each way. For a few years, they will have plenty of room, and **after they are four or five years old, will bear heavy crops of nuts**—far more than enough to pay the small cost of cultivating and caring for the grove. The burs should be thinned each year, to force much of the growth back into the tree, and to produce a better development of root and top. Keep the trees trained low—say twelve to fifteen feet—so the nuts may be gathered from the ground.

By the time the trees are ten years old, they will have commenced to crowd each other and every other one can then be taken out and transplanted, thereby forming another bearing orchard without expense, or they can be grubbed out. Although it takes courage to destroy a tree when it is in



Sober Paragon Chestnut in another roadside planting—field of alfalfa in foreground

profitable bearing, later results will more than justify it. From time to time thereafter, remove trees wherever the branches interfere, until the grove is full-grown, which will be at the age of fifteen to twenty years. In this way you will have realized profits from your Chestnuts almost from the start. A twenty-year-old tree will yield, on an average, three bushels of nuts per year, while twenty-four-year-old trees can generally be depended on for four bushels each per year. An acre of trees at this rate is a decidedly profitable investment, as Chestnuts are among the longest-lived of our trees. The Sober Paragon Chestnut will, it is believed, live and bear for at least a hundred years.



A closer view. This is about an average yield. Note the clean, healthy leaves

Groves of Sober Paragon Chestnut require little or no care in the way of pruning, cultivating and fertilizing, though a reasonable amount of time spent in this work is time well spent. The trees grow into their shapely, attractive form naturally, and generally require no pruning whatever. All that is required to produce this is to keep the nuts picked off for the first year or two, so as to throw all its strength into the tree's development. Revenue comes quickly, as shown by the crop of 8,000 bushels harvested by Colonel Sober last fall, only a small portion of the trees having reached the age of 12 years.

Colonel Sober cultivates part of his groves as has already been explained. Those parts which cannot be tilled he keeps carefully cleared of all kinds of rubbish—burs, leaves, twigs, etc., are raked up and burned each fall.

Profits From Growing Sober Paragon Chestnuts

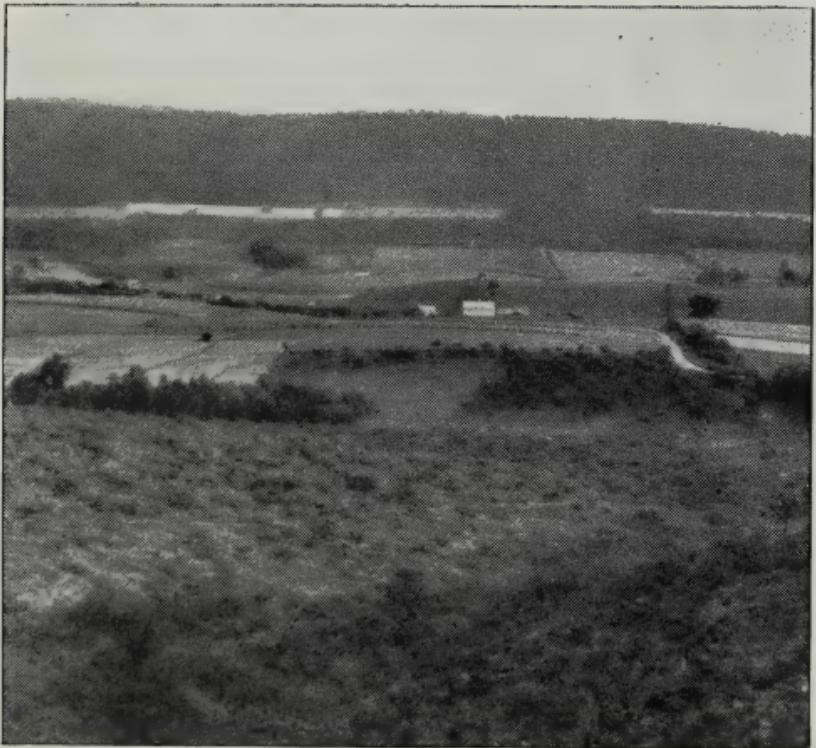
So much for the tree and nut; now how about profits? Is there enough money in growing Sober Paragon Chestnuts to make it worth the average farmer's while? These questions the prospective grower has a right to know—**must** know; and it affords us much pleasure to be able to answer them so thoroughly and satisfactorily from Colonel Sober's personal experience, as well as from that of others who grow and know this splendid nut.

Emphatically, the culture of Sober Paragon Chestnuts **does** pay; the market demand seems practically unlimited, and has been, so far, many times greater than the supply. Two thousand bushels, grown by Mr. Sober one year, were taken by **one** commission merchant at a high price, and hundreds of others would gladly have bought the crop had they had the opportunity. Even across the continent, in Seattle, a commission firm last season ordered them in car-load lots.

Even if the production should be doubled many times over, the markets would still take every nut that is offered. So far, Sober Paragon Chestnuts have regularly sold for two or three times as much as the inferior foreign chestnuts.



Part of one of Colonel Sober's groves. This rocky hillside, on which no cultivated crop would grow, yielded a highly profitable crop in 1910.



400 acres of bearing trees—looking across “Irish Valley” and showing Colonel Sober’s home. Both slopes planted to Sober Paragon Chestnut

Mr. Sober states that six dollars per bushel is a fair average price for the nuts, and the experience of other growers thoroughly accords with this. As the trees require so very little care or special attention, the cost of gathering and marketing the nuts is practically the entire expense. An acre of Sober Paragon Chestnut trees—say fifty trees, ten to fifteen years of age—can be expected to yield, at the lowest estimate, 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of nuts per tree—or, to be conservative, sixty bushels per acre. At the rate of \$6 per bushel—which is much less than is often paid—an acre would bring \$360 per year, with only a comparatively slight expense for upkeep and harvesting.

And it should be remembered that the grove will increase in value every year. For example, let us assume that the grove has reached the age of thirty years—fifty trees to the acre. *This would yield approximately \$1,000 per acre*, with a very low expense for harvesting and marketing. Do you know of any other crop that could make such a showing as this?

It is estimated that an acre of wheat **may** yield as high as thirty-five bushels—which is, however, well above the average. Even at this high yield the farmer can hardly realize more than \$35 to \$40 per acre from the crop—and wheat is costly to raise. Some other things—fruits and berries and market vegetables, for example—can be made, under the most favorable circumstances, to yield \$100 or more per acre. But consider, again, the work they require;

how carefully they must be cultivated, and marketed just at the right time. Then again, these are **uncertain** crops; we often read of fruit-buds destroyed by frost, or of wheat winter-killing.

The planter of Sober Paragon Chestnuts has little to worry about in those respects; his trees will do better if cultivated, but that is not necessary. Frost, hail, and storm, which so often destroy the ordinary crops, work no ill effect on Sober Paragon Chestnut Trees; even severe droughts, which "burn up" field crops, will not ruin, but only reduce somewhat, a crop of these wonderful nuts.

And there is still another attractive feature in growing Sober Paragon Chestnuts; as explained earlier, they will do well in rocky, well-drained soil, such as is often found on hillsides. There are thousands of acres of such land all over the country, either entirely idle, or used only for pasture. Think of planting such land so that it would, after a few years, yield an annual income of \$300 to \$1,000 per acre!

Colonel Sober's hillsides, as illustrated in this booklet, are doing that for him; these were formerly covered with first and second growth timber. Down in the rich fields of "Irish Valley," where his lovely home is located, he grows grains and grasses, fruits and vegetables for market; but nowhere on his estate are there such profitable acres as those sterile, sun-baked, wind-swept hillsides where his Sober Paragon Chestnuts grow.

As to the demand for these nuts, it is safe to say that the market will not be fully supplied for years, even at the present high prices that buyers are glad to pay; and it is not at all likely that there will **ever** be an over-production.

There are two principal reasons for this. First, large quantities of inferior, foreign-grown nuts are at present imported each year, so that, in



10-year-old Sober Paragon Chestnut tree. Note shape of tree and quantity of burs

order to supply even the present demand, Sober Paragon Chestnuts will have to displace the nuts that are brought in from abroad—an easy matter, even at the higher prices that Sober Paragon nuts now command.

Second, the consumption of chestnuts is increasing—and when a variety of the excellence of the Sober Paragon becomes well established, the demand will certainly grow wonderfully. Aside from the fact that they may be eaten raw, chestnuts may be cooked in a wonderful variety of ways—and new recipes will broaden still further the opportunities for using them, and educate the people to use them more fully.

Little or No Danger to Sober Paragon Chestnut Trees from Chestnut Blight

HERE is a widespread interest just now relative to the Chestnut Blight (*Draporthe parasitica*) and we feel that the purpose of this booklet will not have been entirely fulfilled without a frank discussion of this matter as applied to the Sober Paragon Chestnut. Much of the agitation over the chestnut blight has been greatly exaggerated—little more than a “scare” induced by certain sensational newspapers and magazines.

It is true that some native chestnut trees in the Eastern United States have been destroyed by this disease—but it was discovered as far back as 1840, and is, therefore, not spreading so rapidly as many suppose, since most sections of the country have never been affected by it at all.

The Chestnut Blight cannot do serious damage except where the infection can get under the bark; hence, it has been confined mainly to wild chestnut trees, which, of course, do not receive any attention when injured. Proof of this is found in the fact that following a severe “ice storm” in the East a few years ago, which broke down and damaged hundreds of forest trees, the blight did a great deal of damage to native chestnut trees.

We know of cases where owners of native chestnut groves have cut them down and converted them into lumber for fear of blight. This seems foolish to us, as it is probable that such groves would escape the disease, if properly cared for.

Other commercial crops are liable to just as serious diseases in certain sections of the country as chestnuts are to blight



100,000 three-year Sober Paragon Chestnut trees were grown in this nursery block in 1910



Getting ready to ship—roots are dipped in mud to prevent drying

—peach trees in some places have blight and yellows, cotton plantations in various states are ruined by boll weevil, and wheat is sometimes destroyed by rust. But, note the effect—peach growers are not cutting down their orchards, by any means; on the contrary, the number of trees planted each year is steadily increasing. As with peaches, so with the other products; farmers will not stop growing cotton and wheat because these crops are subject to certain diseases; instead, they will select varieties carefully, plant and tend them intelligently, and the result will be, in almost every case, an increase in quality and in total production.

So we see no need for great alarm in the sensational reports that we hear from time to time about chestnut blight. That such a disease exists in our forests, and has in some places done considerable damage, is true; but **we do not know of a single instance where a grove of Sober Paragon Chestnut has been afflicted with it.**

Nor do we believe that there is any likelihood of this blight, which has already been “in our midst” for nearly seventy-five years, ever doing serious damage to the Sober Paragon Chestnut industry, especially when the trees are properly cared for—fertility applied, and dead or broken limbs cut out, to prevent the disease from getting a start.

The past year has been very favorable to the production of good trees, and we are pleased to offer an exceptionally fine lot of trees, strong and shapely, with plenty of good roots, well-developed union of stock and scion, and firm, clean wood. We have grown a very large stock of Sober Paragon Chestnut Trees, but the demand, both at home and abroad, is on the increase, and we cannot guarantee to fill orders. Each year is demonstrating that the Sober Paragon Chestnut is not particularly limited as to where it will grow, and large groves are set out in new locations, the owners demonstrating that there is more money in these nuts than in ordinary farm crops, an orchard of 1,750 trees having been planted at Ottumwa last fall. We therefore recommend that you specify your wants at once, and make the best selection possible at the time the order is received. Prices are as follows:

STANDARD GRAFTED TREES

3 to 5 feet—

Single trees	\$2 00
Twelve trees	18 00
One hundred trees	125 00
One thousand trees	1050 00

2 to 3 feet—

Single trees	\$1 50
Twelve trees	15 00
One hundred trees	110 00
One thousand trees	900 00

Prices include packing and delivery to railroad or express depot. Terms, cash with order, if for immediate shipment. On orders booked ahead a deposit of 25 per cent is required with order.

All Genuine Sober Paragon Chestnut Trees Bear this Metal Seal



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Registered U. S. Patent Office

We are the sole authorized introducers and distributors of the Sober Paragon Chestnut, and every genuine tree bears this seal (see illustration) which is protected by law. The words "Sober Paragon" are stamped in the metal. Refuse all trees not bearing this seal, as they are not genuine.

Duplicate Copy

STATE OF NEW YORK—DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Certificate of Inspection of Nursery Stock

is to certify that the stock in the nursery of Glen Bros., of Rochester, County of Monroe, New York, was duly examined, in compliance with the provisions of Section 88 of the Law, and it was found to be apparently free in all respects from any contagious or disease or diseases, or the San Jose scale or any other dangerously injurious insect. This Certificate expires Sept. 1, 1911. Dated Albany, N. Y., Sept. 1, 1910.

R. A. PEARSON, Commissioner of Agriculture

GLEN BROTHERS, Inc., ROCHESTER, N. Y.



150,000 two-year seedling Sober Paragon Chestnut grown here for spring 1911 grafting



Opening Sober Paragon Chestnut burs at the Sober farm. If allowed to stand a few days after gathering, the burs open readily and do not require frost as wild nuts do

The McFarland Publicity Service, Harrisburg, Pa.